

## Spy Versus Spy

As recently as April 14 Richard Helms, director of the Central Intelligence Agency, assured the world that "the quality of foreign intelligence available to the United States Government in 1971 is better than it has ever been before." That's all right, the administration has now said, but it costs too much and the overlapping and competition among agencies is wasteful and inefficient. The revelations of former CIA official Victor Marchetti (at one time an aide to the deputy director of CIA) that the combined intelligence budget is \$6 billion puts it a billion or so higher than previous estimates. Over 200,000 employees are involved. Hence the President's new reorganization order. Mr. Helms is to have "enhanced leadership" to bring all the fiefdoms under control.

The White House announcement produced two principal reorganizational tools: (a) a new joint intelligence budget and (b) a new evaluation group, which theoretically will affect the missions in Defense, State, the National Security Agency, and the CIA, to name the most prominent. All intelligence agencies will submit their budgets to Helms instead of to the Bureau of the Budget, and he is to sort out the wheat from the chaff. This is not really a new grant of authority. The National Security Act of 1947 gave two jobs to the CIA director - command of the agency itself, and coordinating responsibility as director of Central Intelligence, chairing the United States Intelligence Board. He also sits on the National Security Council. The idea of central supervision has been there from the start. But the idea has foundered on the realities of power; that is to say, the Pentagon. That outfit is run by the Secretary of a department, while the CIA director is still just the head of an agency. For large overseas operations, as in Vietnam and Laos, CIA is completely beholden to the Pentagon.

Bureaucratically, Helms is also in an unfavorable position, although this may not have been the President's intention. Helms will make his combined budget recommendations not directly to the National Security Council, but to a new National Security Intelligence Committee, headed by Henry Kissinger. The reorganization scheme struck Senators Symington and Fulbright as an attempt to wrest from Congress its oversight responsibilities in intelligence matters. Kissinger is inaccessible in the White House, protected from congressional questioning by executive privilege.

Kissinger gains more power through the other presidential innovation, the Net Assessment Group headed by Anthony Marshall in Kissinger's office. This group's task is to define the situation for the United States vis-à-vis the great powers, or any other problem it wants to designate as a crisis. Vigorously pur-

sued, this concept obviously will change the mission and emphasis of the various intelligence agencies. Some will wax, other wane. But they'll still compete. Rep. Nedzi, head of the subcommittee on intelligence oversight for the House Armed Services Committee, has been looking up and down the well-shaded streets of the Intelligence Community and finds that, "There is indeed real competition among the various agencies." He is not certain Helms' budget authority will do anything more than feed interagency suspicions. There will be the argument that intelligence requires compartmentalization at the cost of efficiency, that budget control will mean a monolithic intelligence voice instead of healthy if costly rivalry. Nedzi is concerned but philosophical, gearing up for his duties by going back to the basics set forth in Compton McKenzie's spoof on British intelligence, *Water on the Brain*. In that classic the fictitious Sir William Westmacott, head of the Security of the Realm, is addressing a new recruit. "After all, the whole point of the secret service is that it should be secret."